



THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS

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To Potential Hazard Mitigation Grant Applicants:

Enclosed you will find information for the Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) **2009 Hazard Mitigation Assistance (HMA) Program Guidance**. FEMA's pre-disaster mitigation grant programs provide funds to states, territories, Indian tribal governments, and communities for hazard mitigation planning and the implementation of hazard mitigation projects prior to a disaster event. Funding for these hazard mitigation plans and projects reduces overall risks to the population and structures, while also reducing the reliance on taxpayer-funded federal disaster assistance for disaster recovery. The Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency (MEMA) and Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) co-administer these grant programs on behalf of FEMA in the Commonwealth and encourage you to consider applying for grant funding to mitigate natural hazards that may impact your jurisdiction. For your information, this grant notice has been sent to the local chief elected and/or administrative official, conservation commission, building official, planning official, public works director and emergency manager in your community. Communities are encouraged to coordinate local project applications among other local officials.

For the fiscal year 2009 funding cycle, FEMA is 'unifying' the application and program guidance for the multi-hazard, Pre-Disaster Mitigation (PDM) program with the flood only, Flood Mitigation Assistance (FMA), Severe Repetitive Loss (SRL) and Repetitive Flood Claims (RFC) grant programs into a unified HMA program application cycle. This unification provides several benefits, including:

- Combines the program guidance into one comprehensive document;
- Outlines both the common elements and unique program requirements of the various grant programs;
- Creates economies of scale to provide sub-applicants the ability to develop one grant application that may be applied to any one of the various grant programs;
- Allows for a longer application window to develop and submit eligible mitigation grant applications.

While the statutory origins and sources of the mitigation grant programs may differ, all share the common goal of reducing or eliminating the loss of life and property due to natural hazards.

The application period is now officially open and the complete FY 2009 Unified HMA Guidance is now available from the FEMA website library at: <http://www.fema.gov/library/viewRecord.do?id=3309>

We respectfully request that you please review the program guidance before contacting MEMA and/or DCR with specific questions. Interested applicants are encouraged to coordinate with MEMA/DCR early in the application development process to ensure that proposed mitigation projects are FEMA eligible activities. Be advised that FEMA mitigation grants cannot be used for maintenance, repair or projects already in progress.

All HMA sub-applications must be submitted through FEMA's eGrants Mitigation Grants system. Information regarding FEMA's eGrants application system can be found at: <http://www.fema.gov/government/grant/egrants.shtm>. MEMA is considered the applicant by FEMA and each local government, tribe, eligible non-profit or university applicant for funds are considered the sub-applicant. You must complete a separate application for each individual project your community is considering.

Since MEMA is the applicant we require some time to review and prioritize all the individual local sub-applications so they can be incorporated/attached to the Commonwealth's application. HMA applications are due to FEMA via their electronic application system (eGrants) by Friday December 19, 2008, therefore, the **State has established a deadline for local HMA sub-applications (submitted to the State via eGrants) for 5:00 pm Friday November 21, 2008.** Submitting applications by the State deadline also gives MEMA/DCR the opportunity to review each sub-application and suggest improvements and revisions that can be incorporated before it is officially submitted to FEMA. Once MEMA submits the applications to FEMA, there will be **no** opportunity to revise, amend or submit additional supporting information. It is important that each applicant be aware that these grant programs are competitive and FEMA will not be able to fund all projects.

Some grant program requirements to be aware of (please refer to the HMA Program Guidance for specific sub-applicant and project eligibility requirements):

- **Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plan Requirement:** To be eligible for HMA project grants, applicants must have a locally adopted and FEMA-approved Local Natural Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plan (in accordance with 44 Code of Federal Regulations Part 201) by the FEMA application deadline (December 19, 2008);
- **Non-Federal Cost Share Requirement:** Sub-applicants must commit to the non-federal share of the proposed application cost; depending on the grant program this can range between 10% to 25% (or more) of the total estimated project cost.
- The **Severe Repetitive Loss (SRL)** grant program is only available to specific property owners that meet the FEMA definition of an SRL property (see the program guidance) and appear on the official list of FEMA-validated residential SRL property addresses. Communities that contain SRL Properties will be contacted directly by MEMA/DCR.
- All proposed project applications must include a formal Benefit-Cost Analysis (using FEMA-approved methodology/software) to document the project's cost-effectiveness. Planning applications do not have a BCA requirement.
- All sub-applicants must be participating in the **National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP)**, to be eligible to apply for HMA grant funds (see 2009 HMA Guidance section 2.1.3.3.2).

To assist potential sub-applicants considering applying for FEMA mitigation funding, MEMA/DCR will be hosting future grant program briefing(s) and may also be offering application related training (Benefit-Cost Analysis [BCA], project development, etc.). The grant program briefing will provide an overview of the programs, available funding and relevant application process/deadlines. Interested sub-applicants are encouraged to attend this session. Details regarding the grant program briefings will be published on the Disaster Recovery/Mitigation section of the MEMA website (www.mass.gov/mema) in the near future. If you wish to receive e-mail notices of program briefings and trainings please forward your e-mail address to:

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